



Papiamentu words and phrases you may want to know!



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TikTok faces app deletions, censorship claims and glitches in days after its ownership change

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY**
AP Technology Writer

Censorship claims, technical problems and a report of a surge in app deletions are just some of the challenges TikTok is facing as it adjusts to a new ownership structure in the United States that was finalized last week. The company said Monday it was experiencing a "major infrastructure issue triggered by a power outage" at one of its U.S. data center partner sites. The outage led to bugs such as creators temporarily seeing zero views on their videos even if people had looked at them, as well as slow load times and time-out requests when posting videos.

On Tuesday, TikTok said it had made significant progress restoring services though users could still see glitches while using the popular video sharing app.

At the same time, users were raising concerns that the company is "censoring" videos, including ones critical of President Don-



The icon for the TikTok video sharing app is seen on a smartphone in Marple Township, Pa., Feb. 28, 2023.

ald Trump, ICE or mentions of Jeffrey Epstein. The complaints were enough for California Gov. Gavin Newsom to announce on X Monday that he is launching a review into whether TikTok is violating state law by censoring Trump-critical content.

Jamie Favazza, a spokesperson for TikTok's new U.S. joint venture, said it is

inaccurate to say that the problems users have been encountering are "anything but the technical issues we've transparently confirmed."

Still, the technical problems combined with the ties that some of the new owners have to Trump bristled some U.S. users just enough to delete the app. Market intelligence firm Sensor

Tower said Tuesday that daily average app uninstalls grew 130% from Jan. 22 to Jan. 26 compared with the previous 30 days. However, daily average users still increased by 2% in the same period, which Sensor Tower says suggests the uninstalls had little effect on overall usage. And while TikTok lagged YouTube and Instagram in U.S.

user growth, people spent more time on the platform than its rivals.

Minda Smiley, a social media analyst at research firm Emarketer, noted that ownership change did just happen and that TikTok is going through a lot of infrastructure-related shifts, which can lead to technical issues. But if there are still problems with certain videos not uploading, or the censorship claims persist, TikTok could see bigger issues down the line.

"Optics and perceptions are really important in situations like this, so I would stay like regardless of what's actually happening, if people do feel as if content is being suppressed or content is difficult to upload or is being moderated or whatever it might be, that's enough reason for a lot of users to flee or to stop using TikTok or to say they're going to stop using TikTok," she said.

That being said, "what users say and do is often different," she added. □

Associated Press

Google adds AI image generation to Chrome browser, side panel option for virtual assistant

By **MICHAEL LIEDTKE**
AP Technology Writer

Google is empowering its Chrome browser with the ability to alter imagery and a virtual assistant to help with online tasks as part of its push to turbocharge its digital services with more artificial intelligence technology.

The features rolling out include making Google's AI image generator and editing tool, Nano Banana, available to Chrome's logged-in users on desktop computers in the United States. The expanded access to Nano Banana through the leading web browser may further blur the lines between real-life pictures and fabricated images.

The browser's expansion will also offer an option for Chrome's U.S. users to open a side panel so an AI-powered assistant can

help with an assortment of chores while a user remains engaged with other online tasks.

Subscribers to Google's AI Pro and Ultra services will also be able to activate an "auto browse" function that will log into websites, shop for merchandise on

command and prepare posts on social media. Users will still have to manually complete purchases from the shopping carts prepared by AI and approve drafted social media posts.

The AI in Chrome relies on the Gemini 3 model that

Google released late last year and is now being baked into many of the services that helped its corporate parent, Alphabet, recently surpass a market value of \$4 trillion.

Earlier this month, Google tapped into Gemini to bring more AI features to Gmail as part of an effort to make that service behave more like a personal assistant and then funneled more of the technology into its search engine, in hopes of providing more relevant answers tailored to users' individual tastes and habits.

The upgrades to Google's search engine plug into the company's "Personal Intelligence" technology that leverages AI to learn more about people's lives. Google is promising to roll out a Personal Intelligence option in Chrome at some point later this year.

Chrome's AI makeover is rolling out just a few months after a federal judge rejected the U.S. Department of Justice's push to force Google to sell the browser as part of the penalty for running an illegal monopoly in search. The judge rebuffed the proposed breakup partly because he believes AI already is reshaping the competitive landscape as smaller rivals such as OpenAI and Perplexity deploy the technology in chatbots and their own web browsers.

Before releasing its AI browser Atlas last October, OpenAI had expressed interest in buying Chrome if the breakup had been ordered. Perplexity, which offers an AI browser called Comet, even submitted a \$34.5 billion bid for Chrome before the judge opted against a sale mandate. □



A woman walks by a giant screen with a logo at an event at the Paris Google Lab on the sidelines of the AI Action Summit in Paris, on Feb. 9, 2025.

Associated Press

CBS News chief Bari Weiss tells staff 'we're toast' if they continue on current path

By **DAVID BAUDER** AP Media Writer

Addressing her staff three months into her job as CBS News boss, Bari Weiss on Tuesday invoked legendary newsman Walter Cronkite as a symbol of old thinking and said that if the network continues with its current strategy, "we're toast."

Weiss announced the hiring of 18 new contributors and said CBS News needs to do stories that will "surprise and provoke — including inside our own newsroom."

Weiss, founder of the Free Press website and without broadcast news experience before being hired by CBS parent Paramount's new management, has quickly become a headline-maker and polarizing figure in journalism. She held a "60 Minutes" story critical of President Donald Trump's deportation policy from being broadcast for a month and has critics watching to see if she's moving the network in a Trump-friendly direction.

She spoke to the network's staff on Tuesday, and released a copy of her remarks publicly, making clear that she sees her role as a change agent.

No CBS News figure is revered quite as much as Cronkite, the "CBS Evening News" anchor dubbed



In this undated photo released by Paramount, one of the The Free Press's co-founders Bari Weiss poses for a portrait.

"the most trusted man in America" during the 1960s and 1970s. Weiss said she understood the nostalgia. "We can't reverse time's arrow," she said, according to the copy of her remarks. "He had two competitors. We have two billion, give or take."

She said CBS News is not producing a product that enough people want. She said "not enough people trust us" and since the network isn't doing enough to meet the audience where it is, it is being abandoned

for a wide variety of sources including podcasts, newsletters, YouTube and nimbler competitors.

"Our strategy until now has been to cling to the audience that remains on broadcast television," she said. "If we stick to that strategy, we're toast."

It's urgent for CBS News to shift to a streaming mentality because it will ultimately become the primary and eventually only way that people consume its material, she said. Weiss wants

CBS News to become a lab for new ideas podcasts, newsletters and the like. She mentioned CNBC host and author Andrew Ross Sorkin as a role model for becoming a name brand. CBS News is going to put a huge emphasis on producing scoops, she said.

"Not scoops that expire minutes later. But investigative scoops. And, crucially, scoops of ideas. Scoops of explanation. This is where we can soar and where we'll be investing," she said.

Weiss said she sees CBS News as the "best capitalized media start-up in the world."

"But start-ups aren't for everyone," she said. "They're places that move at rapid speed. They experiment. They try new things. They sometimes create noise and, yes, bad press. If that's not your bag, that's OK. It's a free country and I completely respect if you decide this is just not the right place at the right time for you."

She talked about a "transformation" of CBS' workforce in the coming years in a question-and-answer session, but gave no specifics about what that will mean, according to a person who heard the speech but spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to report on it.

Weiss said that "we in this building need to reflect more of the political friction that animates our national conversation" and "widen the aperture" of stories that CBS tells and voices that the network speaks to. CBS has notably had interviews with several Trump administration figures, and Trump was interviewed on "60 Minutes" on Nov. 2 and by evening news anchor Tony Dokoupil on Jan. 13. □

Associated Press

Ruth E. Carter makes Oscar history again with costume designer nomination for 'Sinners'

By **JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.** AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Ruth E. Carter has made history once more.

With her Oscar nomination for "Sinners," Carter has become the most-nominated Black woman in Academy Awards history across any category, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences confirmed Thursday. The trailblazing costume designer was recognized for her work on Ryan Coogler's blues-steeped vampire epic, set in the Jim Crow-era Mississippi Delta.

"It's ... pride, gratitude, responsibility," Carter told The Associated Press. She previously won Oscars for "Black Panther" in 2018 and "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" in 2023, becoming the first Black

woman to win two Academy Awards. Carter is now a five-time nominee, surpassing Oscar-winning actor Viola Davis. She is tied with longtime collaborator Spike Lee and Morgan Freeman for the third-most nominations among Black creatives, behind the late Quincy Jones and Denzel Washington.

"This is a major step in the development of our voices in Hollywood," she said.

Over her career, Carter has shaped the visual language of some of Hollywood's most influential films. She earned Oscar nominations for her work on Spike Lee's "Malcolm X" and Steven Spielberg's "Amistad," and received acclaim for period ensembles in projects including "The Butler," "Selma" and the reboot of "Roots." □



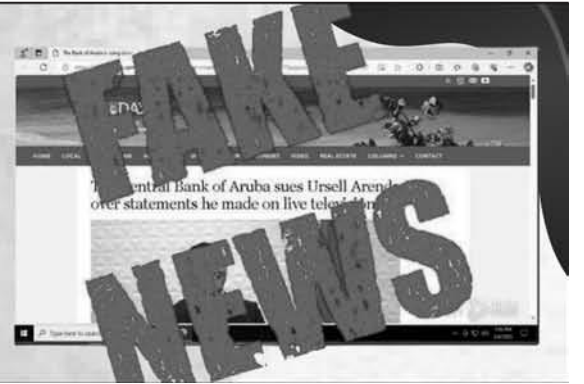
Ruth E. Carter appears at the 31st Annual Critics Choice Awards in Santa Monica, Calif., on Jan. 4, 2026.

Associated Press

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Mississippi sending 135 snowplows to help clear ice and snow from traffic-clogged highways

By **RUSS BYNUM** and **JEFF MARTIN** Associated Press

Mississippi officials said they were sending 135 snowplows Wednesday to clear ice and snow from two interstate highways where frozen conditions caused huge traffic jams.

Emergency officials said they were rushing supplies to drivers stalled along ice-covered stretches of Interstates 55 and 22 in northern Mississippi, an area still reeling from a weekend winter storm that blasted parts of the South and the Northeast with ice and snow.

Helping stranded drivers and moving stalled vehicles "remains a top priority," Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves said in a social media post.

The Mississippi National Guard said citizen-soldiers equipped with wreckers began arriving before dawn to help clear I-55 and I-22.

Traffic remained snarled on the two interstates in



Snow removal work continues Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2026, in front of the Berrien County Administration Center in St. Joseph, Mich.

northern Mississippi at midday Wednesday, many hours after problems began when plunging temperatures Tuesday night caused the highways to re-freeze. Roadside cameras operated by the Mississippi Department of Transportation showed semitrucks

and pickups bumper-to-bumper on stretches of I-22 lined with snow.

The Mississippi National Guard said citizen-soldiers equipped with wreckers began arriving before dawn to help clear I-55 and I-22.

In the small community of

Red Banks, Mississippi, local authorities were asking people with all-terrain vehicles to bring water, food, blankets or gas to stranded motorists, said Lacey Clancy, who works at a cafe near I-22 and neighboring Highway 178.

Clancy said sheets of ice

covered the highways and cars and trucks sat idle, covering the highways and backing up along on ramps and exit ramps.

"The highway kind of looks like a parking lot," Clancy said in a phone interview. "A lot of people have run out of gas, abandoned their vehicles."

Most of the eastern U.S. was still grappling with frigid weather days after a weekend storm blasted the Northeast and parts of the South with snow and ice.

More than 380,000 homes and businesses, most of them in Mississippi and Tennessee, remained without electricity, according to the outage tracking website poweroutage.us. And at least 50 people had been reported dead in states afflicted by the dangerous cold.

The toll includes three Texas brothers ages 6, 8 and 9 who perished after falling through the frozen surface of a pond in Texas. □

Associated Press

A sea turtle with 3 flippers swims free after Florida rehab, now followed by satellite



Spectators watch as a loggerhead sea turtle named Pyari enters the ocean during a release after rehabilitation in Juno Beach, Fla., Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026.

Associated Press

By **CODY JACKSON** and **FREIDA FRISARO** Associated Press

JUNO BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Cheers rose from a bundled-up crowd as a loggerhead sea turtle that survived a likely shark attack trundled back into the ocean after months of rehabilitation in Florida, carrying a satellite tracker to see how she fares with only three flippers.

The air on the beach was chilly, with temperatures in the 40s Fahrenheit (roughly 4 to 9 degrees Celsius). But the Atlantic Ocean has hovered around a comfortable 77 F (25 C), said Heather Barron, chief science officer and a veterinarian at the Loggerhead Marinelife Center in Juno Beach.

To acclimate the turtle for reentry, the fa-

cility kept her tank's water temperature at around 80 F (27 C), Barron said. Beachgoers snapped photos as the turtle crawled down the sand, the satellite tracker's long antenna waving in the air, before she disappeared into the waves.

The turtle was named Pyari, a Hindi term of endearment meaning "lovely" or "beloved." She arrived at the center in November from the nearby Inwater Research Group.

Some kind of predator had tried to make a meal of her, the marine center said in a statement, leaving Pyari with extensive injuries to her neck, shell and both front flippers. That led to the amputation of most of her left forelimb. □

'Hobbit houses' that might just save a Moldovan village

Rogojeni, Moldova

They call Rogojeni the "hobbit village", and its little half-buried houses, built to resist Moldova's cold winters and hot summers, do look like something from "The Lord of the Rings".

The traditional dugout houses have put the shrinking settlement on the tourist map and locals hope they may also help to save it.

"We do fear that the village could disappear, considering that there are so few people left," said mayor Ruslan Groza, with only 30 people left in a hamlet that once had a population of 200.

"My goal is to develop this locality, build roads, repair where possible the houses that can be preserved and develop tourism," he told AFP.

Rogojeni is one of the last villages that still boasts the low stone "basca" houses built into grassy hills, with their small doors forcing people to stoop down when they enter.

More and more tourists are coming after one of the dwellings was repaired and



Maria Ardeleanu (L), 86, stands next to her friend outside a "basca" museum-house in Rogojeni village January 4, 2026.

opened to visitors in 2020, said Groza. A South Korean student was visiting when AFP went to the village two hours north of the capital Chisinau earlier this month. He had even been invited to join a pig roast by locals ahead of the January 7 Christmas celebration.

Such customs are "hard to see" elsewhere, said Sangkyoung Lee, 22, who looked amazed as smoke rose from the burning hay

covering the pig as snow fell all around.

Inside the house-turned-museum, pig stew, polenta with sheep cheese, pickles and red wine were served around a table in a small room with an arched entrance and blue walls decorated with traditionally handsewn carpets in lively colours.

Exodus

While mayor Groza, a

46-year-old history teacher, takes pride in the "immense cultural heritage" of the village, he admits most of it has been left to decay, like an old school and church of which only the outer walls remain. With tens of thousands of Moldovans emigrating every year mostly to EU countries for a better life, many villages have become ghost towns. Since 2014 Moldovan villages have lost almost half

a million inhabitants, according to a 2024 census, with a million Moldovans estimated to be living abroad.

But the mayor's wife, Mariana Groza, 45, is optimistic, insisting that villages will "revive along with tradition".

A literature and French teacher, she started an embroidery and traditional costumes workshop, posting her work on TikTok.

"I have loved this craft since childhood. Not a day goes by without me sewing a cross-stitch or crocheting something. If I don't, the day passes in vain for me," she said. "We must promote traditions."

Singing and dancing

Together with other women from the village, including two grandmothers over 80, she sang traditional carols in front of the museum, ringing a bell while a man played the accordion, as part of the pre-Christmas celebration.

On one of the more joyous songs, the two grandmothers hugged each other and started dancing and cheering. □

Anglican church's first female leader confirmed at London service

London, United Kingdom

Former nurse Sarah Mullally was officially confirmed Wednesday as the first female Archbishop of Canterbury and the first woman to head the Church of England, the mother church of the 85-million-strong global Anglican communion.

At a historic service at London's St Paul's Cathedral, Mullally, 63, legally took up the position ahead of her formal installation or enthronement at Canterbury Cathedral on March 25.

Mullally will begin her public ministry and full programme of public engagements after that date, according to the church.

A heckler briefly interrupted proceedings and was escorted from the cathedral, although it was not immediately clear what

the person said.

Her appointment has caused a backlash among some conservative members of the Anglican communion, particularly in Africa, with The Church of Uganda describing it last October as "sad news".

Conservative churches have been at odds for years with more liberal Western counterparts, particularly over women priests and LGBTQ issues.

Ahead of the service, Mullally had spoken of her hopes to lead with "calmness, consistency and compassion", in what she described as "times of division and uncertainty for our fractured world".

"It is an extraordinary and humbling privilege to have been called to be the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury," she said in a state-

ment.

Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell, who is second in rank in the Anglican hierarchy, said he hoped that as she took the "baton" the church would learn from its "past failings" and become "simpler, humbler and bolder".

'Hope'

Mullally was named in October as the successor to Justin Welby, who announced he would be stepping down last January amid fallout over an abuse scandal.

He resigned after a report found the Church of England had covered up a 1970s serial abuse case and that Welby had failed to report the abuses to authorities when they came to his attention in 2013.

According to the independent probe, John Smyth,

a lawyer who organised evangelical summer camps in the 1970s and 1980s, was responsible for the abuse of as many as 130 boys and young men. The Church of England became Britain's state establishment church follow-

ing King Henry VIII's split from the Roman Catholic Church in the 1530s.

The British monarch is its supreme governor, while the Archbishop of Canterbury is seen as the spiritual leader of Anglicans worldwide. □



Sarah Mullally (C) takes part in the 'Confirmation of Election' ceremony to legally confirm her position as the new Archbishop of Canterbury, at St Paul's Cathedral in London on January 28, 2026.

Dutch government is ordered to protect residents on Caribbean island of Bonaire from climate change

By **MIKE CORDER**

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands

(AP) — A court on Wednesday ordered the Dutch government to draw up a plan to protect residents on the tiny Caribbean island of Bonaire from the effects of climate change a sweeping victory for the islanders. The Hague District Court, in a stunning rebuke of Dutch authorities, also ruled that the government discriminated against the island's 20,000 inhabitants by not taking "timely and appropriate measures" to protect them from climate change before it's too late.

"The island already suffers from flooding due to tropical storms and extreme rainfall, and according to several researchers, this will worsen in the coming years. Even conservative forecasts predict that parts of the island will be underwater by 2050, so in 25 years," Judge Jerzy Luiten told a packed courtroom.

Binding targets

The court also ordered the Dutch government to set binding targets within 18 months, laid down in law, to cut greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Paris Climate agreement. That pact, signed just over a decade ago, commits countries to keeping the rise in global temperatures by the year 2100 compared with preindustrial times "well below" 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), and



This May 7, 2018 file photo shows the Caribbean Netherlands island of Bonaire

Associated Press

says they will "endeavor to limit" them even more, to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The case brought by eight Bonaire residents and backed by environmental group Greenpeace, sought to compel the government to better shield its citizens from the effects of increasing temperatures and rising sea levels and could set a precedent for similar legal challenges elsewhere.

Reaction to the ruling

"The judges heard us," said one of the residents, Jackie Bernabela.

"We are no longer second-class citizens. Equality. I am very happy," she said in the courtroom as she wiped away tears.

The government can appeal the 90-page written decision. Sophie Hermans,

minister for climate policy and green growth, said: "Today, the court delivered a ruling of significance for the residents of Bonaire and the European Netherlands." She said she would study it with other government departments before responding.

Greenpeace campaigner Eefje de Kroon welcomed the ruling and said that the organization would carefully monitor how the government implements the court's orders. She called it an "amazing victory" not only for the people of Bonaire, "but for all of us, because the Dutch government needs to do more to stop the climate crisis and actually protect people who are already experiencing the effects."

Government efforts

The case was heard in The Hague because Bonaire, along with two other islands, St. Eustatius and Saba, became special Dutch municipalities in 2010. The island's 20,000 residents are Dutch citizens based on their colonial history.

Lawyers for the government argued that the Netherlands already is making strides to combat climate change, citing greenhouse gas reductions and mitigation efforts. Government lawyer Edward Brans said the issue should be handled by national administrations and not judges.

But the court ruled that government efforts weren't enough, saying a target to reduce emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to 1990

levels wasn't binding and didn't fully include emissions from air and sea transport. The court also said that the Netherlands was "highly unlikely" to meet its 2030 target.

Political backdrop

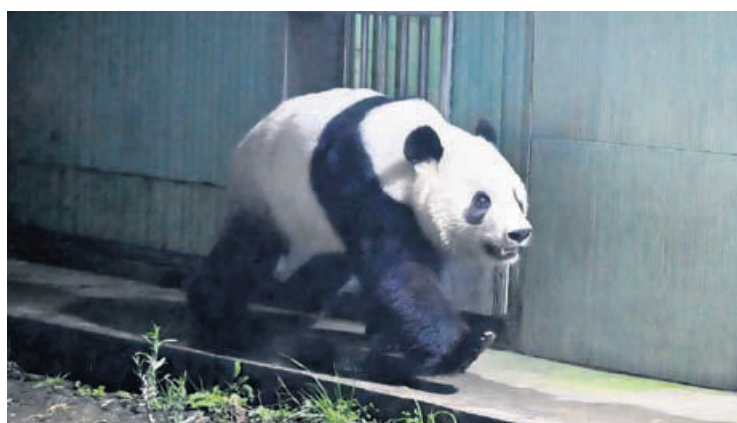
The ruling came as weeks of talks to form a new Dutch government following a national election in late October look like producing a new minority coalition headed up by centrist D66 leader Rob Jetten.

He earned the nickname "climate pusher" when he was a minister responsible for shepherding through a raft of legislation intended to reduce the Netherlands' reliance on fossil fuels and significantly cut its carbon emissions.

Now, the new government that Jetten is expected to lead will have to tighten the measures in line with the court's ruling.

Groundbreaking decisions

It's not the first time that The Hague District Court has issued a groundbreaking climate ruling. The same court heard the first stage of the landmark Urgenda case more than a decade ago. That case wrapped up in 2019 when the Dutch Supreme Court ruled in favor of climate activists and ordered the government to cut greenhouse gas emissions, a legal battle that paved the way for similar challenges around the world. □



In this photo taken in the early hours of Jan. 28, 2026, and released by China Conservation and Research Center for Giant Panda, giant panda Xiao Xiao, newly returned from Japan, walks in an enclosure at the China Conservation and Research Center for Giant Panda in southwestern China's Sichuan province.

Associated Press

Japan's last pair of pandas have arrived back in China

By **HUIZHONG WU**

Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Japan's last pair of pandas have returned to China, leaving Japan without the lovable bears for the first time in half a century. The bears are heading back as diplomatic relations between the two countries are at their lowest point in years over the new Japanese Prime Minister's stance on Taiwan, an island Beijing claims as its own, making it unlikely that there will be replacement bears.

The twins Xiao Xiao and Lei Lei have an adoring fan base in Japan, where thousands of people flocked to Tokyo's Ueno

Zoo ahead of their departure.

China first sent pandas to Japan in 1972, a gift meant to mark the normalization of diplomatic ties between the two neighbors. Beijing has long used the bears as a diplomatic tool: a sign of good will and an extension of the country's soft power, and one that it can retract when bilateral relationships turn adversarial. Images from state broadcaster CCTV, showed the two pandas, Xiao Xiao and Lei Lei, arriving in crates in southwestern China's Sichuan province, where they will stay in quarantine at the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda. □

Papiamento words and phrases you may want to know!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba is a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and languages. Primarily for this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamento above all else. Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that can get you a hat tip from an Aruban.



When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamento you may encounter is "Bon bini." Bon bini in Papiamento means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamento word for tourists.

Hi! Bye!

To be fair, there is no unique way to say "hello" in Papiamento—at least not officially. We often just use the English "hello" or "hey", or Dutch "hallo" to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with "con bay?" or "con ta?"

Con bay is a shortened version of "con ta bay?", which essentially means "how are you?"

The word "con" in Papiamento means "how?" and is pronounced with a rounder "o" sounds, like in the English word "cone". "Ta bay" refers to how you are doing.

When we say goodbye, we use the word "ayo" (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also...kinda?). We may also use "te oro", which means "see you later".

Greetings during the day

Most, if not all, languages have different ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamento is no different. Since Papiamento is heavily influenced from Portuguese and Spanish, some of these phrases may look very familiar.

Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word "bon" means "good", and while "dia" does not directly mean "morning" in English,

it is used often to refer to the morning time.

Bon tardi

In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use "bon tardi" to greet people, which means "good afternoon". "Tardi" actually comes from the word "atardi", which directly translates to "afternoon". However, the shortened "tardi" is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for our last greeting of the day.

Bon nochi.

You guessed it, "bon nochi" means "good night". Just like "tardi", "nochi" is actually the shortened version of the word "anochi".

Yes...no...maybe?

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamento. Just like Spanish, our yeses are "si" and our no's are "no". Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say "se", which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation.

However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

Thanks man...

Lastly, a word that we can also say more often is "danki", which means literally "thank you". "Danki" is derived from the Dutch word "bedankt". Though we don't really have a translation for "I appreciate it" in English, we do use "masha danki" to convey the message. "Masha" means "a lot" or "very", so "masha danki" means "thank you very much". □

The Lionfish and its threat to our marine wild life

(Oranjestad)—Despite its colorful and striking appearance, the lionfish has become a Caribbean-wide problem for Atlantic sea life. The Aruban marine wild life is also affected by this beautiful dilemma, as it is foreign to our waters and has become a danger to our local fish and reefs.

Originating from the Indo-Pacific Ocean, the lionfish is a relatively small fish. It has no teeth, but it does protect itself against predators using its sharp, colorful spikes. It is said that the sting of a lionfish can be up to 100 times more painful than that of a bee's sting.

Its natural predators in the Indo-Pacific are sharks and barracudas, but in the Caribbean Sea, local fish do not recognize the lionfish as part of their diet. In other words, the lionfish has no predators in the Caribbean Sea. And this becomes a major problem for our local marine life; if there are no predators to stimulate population control of lionfish, these fish can continue to reproduce and expand to other parts of the Atlantic, become more invasive and dangerous for other types of fish.

For Aruba, the lionfish is a problem especially for

our local coral reefs. According to Patrick van Brakel, lionfish expert and hunter from the Hunting Lionfish Aruba foundation, every reef has a "cleaning station"—tiny fish that eat algae and other types of waste on a reef, thus maintaining the reef's health and providing food to the fish population in the area. However, as the lionfish feeds off of these tiny fish, it becomes harder for the coral reef to maintain its health.

Patrick also shares the origins of lionfish in the Caribbean Sea. It is theorized that the introduction of these fish in the Atlantic happened in Florida, where people would buy lionfish from across the world to keep in their aquariums. However, lionfish grow, and as these buyers realized that the fish were too much upkeep, they were let out into the ocean to roam free. From continental USA, the lionfish travelled to and invaded the entire Caribbean area, from Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao up to New York. In Aruba, lionfish were discovered in 2009.

Controlling the lionfish population is a challenge, as each female fish can lay up to 40,000 eggs a day. Luckily, we have people like van Brakel who dedicate their lives hunting and capturing these invasive species, using them for consump-



tion and jewelry making.

They are caught with a hand spear, an object resembling a garbage picker with 4 sharp prongs. These spears are used like a sling shot to catch lionfish from a distance. These fish are then put into a collecting tube and taken out of the water. This way, he does his part in protecting the local wild life. □

“Serendipitous”: How Luanne’s trip to Aruba saved her life



(Oranjestad)—Who could imagine that a random encounter thousands of miles away from home could save your life? 37-year-old Luanne from Massachusetts certainly can. What was supposed to be a normal vacation with friends to Aruba turned into a life-saving trip that gave Luanne another chance of life and gave her two new life-long friends.

Luanne’s incredible story begins in 2024. Luanne, a St. Lucia native, had been dealing with an autoimmune disorder that had been destroying her lungs for years. She required

oxygen 24/7 and couldn’t laugh or walk to her neighbor’s house without running out of breath. “She used to drive to our home,” her friend Andrea told Aruba Today.

Despite what she was going through, she never let her condition get her down. She’s a world traveler, having been to several countries and embarked on great adventures throughout the years. She is also—as her friends would call her—an old soul. Having her around is always a delight, and she never fails to carry a smile wherever she went.

In January of 2024, her friends Andrea and Jeff were celebrating their 10th year of marriage on the island of Aruba. As she told us, they had been coming here for a long time, and even got married on the island, so what better way to celebrate the big milestone? They invited all of their friends and family for the celebration, including Luanne.

The week before leaving for Aruba, Luanne got the unfortunate news from her doctors in Boston that was not eligible for a double lung transplant and that there was nothing left they could do for her. At the time, they told her she had about a month left to live.

On their first day in Aruba, the gang was having dinner at the restaurant located at their timeshare. Luanne, who at the time was still on oxygen and who needed a wheelchair to get around, was left alone at the dinner table while the others briefly went to see the sunset. They were gone for 15 minutes, but when they got back, couldn’t



find Luanne sitting at their table. Their friend was sitting at another table, talking to her new friend from New York, Herman and Deb.

Initially they thought nothing of it; Luanne has always been a social butterfly and people were always drawn by her energy. Little did they all know, this chance meeting would change Luanne’s life for good.

As Herman would tell us, when he first saw Luanne he was immediately noticed her oxygen machine and couldn’t help but introduce himself to her. It turns out that Herman’s wife, Deb, underwent a double lung transplant in November 2022. Before that, she carried around an oxygen machine, just like Luanne.

Herman felt compassion for Luanne, especially since she was so young (she was turning 35 at that time). So he struck up a conversation with her and invited her over to his and Deb’s table. There they talked about her condition and Deb shared her own experience with the surgery.

Upon hearing that Luanne had been told that she could not get the procedure, Deb quickly offered to set her up with her doctor in New York. Miraculously, he answered

her call and gladly said he would help Luanne.

That one call would change everything for Luanne. And what came after was a group effort to get Luanne her once-in-a-lifetime chance at life. “It takes a village,” Andrea remarked.

Several days after that hopeful call, more conversations were had and by the end of that week, Luanne was on the phone with the surgeon in New York! Over the next couple of months, she would drive back and forth between Boston to New York to get extensive testing done.

On June 3rd, Luanne was officially on the transplant list. Luanne told us that when she got her letter, she initially didn’t understand what it meant. It took her calling Herman, who got her on a call with UNOS (United Network for Organ Sharing), to understand that she has been granted a unique opportunity—something she thought was out of reach just a few months ago.

Herman and Deb were more than just a connection to a great doctor, they became her guide throughout the entire process, taking her in their care and helping her with everything she needed. They truly became her guardian angels.

On Monday, June 10th, Luanne, Jeff and Andrea were going over their plans for Wednesday night. As they recalled, they were heading to Gillette Stadium for Tom Brady’s retirement party. Immediately after Luanne purchased her ticket that same night, Jeff jokingly said, “What if you get the call from NY saying they have lungs for you?” This must have been magic words, because not even 10 minutes later, Luanne got her life-changing phone that there were lungs waiting for her.

Continued on next Page

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“Serendipitous”

Continued

Everyone was in a frenzy after that call. They needed to move fast; Luanne was told that she had about 4 hours to get to New York for the procedure. “We got lungs!” they all screamed while rush-

ing to pack everything Luanne needed for New York.

The car ride was grueling, as Jeff would express. Luanne was on the phone with her friends and family the entire time, all of whom were extremely excited and nervous, but wishing her all the

best. Jeff, meanwhile, drove as fast as he could all the way to New York. They even encountered a police officer, who upon hearing the urgency of the situation, kindly offered to escort them to NY. Jeff kindly declined his generous offer.

Jeff and Luanne arrived at the hospital around 12:30 a.m. Luanne was taken into surgery right around 5:30 that morning, and the operation started just after 7:00. Jeff stayed at the hospital so that he could report back to everyone anxiously await-

ing to hear how things were progressing. Her surgery was completed around 3:00 that afternoon, and Jeff was allowed in to see her about an hour later. She was unconscious but looked good, all things considered. She stayed about a week in the hospital before moving into her new apartment in NY.

It's been two years since her life-saving procedure, and Luanne is doing amazing. She no longer needs oxygen, is breathing completely on her own and can walk long distances without becoming

winded or tired. Her friends are also delighted to finally discover her cute laugh. This month, she and the gang (including Herman and Deb) came back to Aruba, where they told us their story right in the exact restaurant where it all began.

Imagine a new lease on life after a chance meeting on a tropical island. There is only one word that they keep using to describe this miraculous story: Serendipitous—Occurring or discovered by chance in a happy or beneficial way. □

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The legend of the Kibrahacha tree

ORANJESTAD—The Kibrahacha is a famous tree known locally for its bright, yellow flowers that blooms for just three days. Scientifically known as *Tabebuia billbergii*, and in English as the Yellow Poui, this tree is native to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, and is considered among locals as one of the most spectacular trees on the island. But did you also know that the beautiful yellow flowers have a story behind them?

The Kibrahacha is said to have extremely hard wood—so hard that it can break an axe. In fact, that's what its name means in Papiamentu: "kibra" (break) "hacha" (axe). The flowers bloom around April and May, but this only last for about three days, as the flowers start to fall off and the tree starts growing its green leaves. The Kibrahacha is especially particular, as it's the only one among its neighboring trees to starts blooming first.

The legend of the Kibrahacha

cha
Written by Hubert (Lio Booi)

One day Aterima, who lived west of the hill Sero Warawara, woke up one day to find her father sleeping in his hammock, suffering a bout of terrible fever. Her mother was very worried, and as was the custom in the olden days, asked Aterima to go fetch Kudawecha, who was a epistemophile, to come see his father.

Aterima wasted to time and went to go fetch Kudawecha. Upon telling Kudawecha that her father was sick, he immediately accompanied Aretima back to her hut, where he encountered her father in a bad state. Not willing to waste any time, he told Aretima that the only thing that can cure her father is a home-made potion made out of the Kibrahacha flower. At the time the Kibrahacha was not yet in her blooming season, but the stubborn Kudawecha was determined to bring back Aretima's father back

to health, and so off they went to the nearest Kibrahacha tree.

When they arrived at the tree, they saw that it was covered head to toe in thorns, with only a few closed flowers at the very top. Kudawecha, experienced veteran in all things Aruban flora and fauna, told Aretima to start plucking the thorns of the tree to climb to the top where the flowers are. Aretima, just as determined to save her father, didn't hesitate to start.

To her surprise, every time she plucked a thorn of the tree, a bright, yellow flower bloomed in its place. The thorns were hard to pluck out, but Aretima continued plucking with enthusiasm and wonder at the unfolding sight before her. Not too long after she was able to fill her entire satchel with the yellow flowers.

Kudawecha, satisfied to see Aretima so happy and encouraged to help her father, took her back to her hut.



Upon arriving back at the hut, Aretima's mother quickly made a tea out of the flowers and gave it to her sick husband. Miraculously, after just one sip of the tea, the father's fever left his body immediately, and he opened eyes and sprung up feeling new.

The next morning, they all

visited the same Kibrahacha tree that saved the life of Aretima's father and they saw another miracle. The tree was covered again in the same bright, yellow flowers, with not a thorn in sight. And as the legend goes, from that day on, the Kibrahacha tree no longer produced any more thorns. □

Dining in? Try making some local favorites! How to make "funchi"

(Oranjestad)—One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is "funchi hasa" (fried polenta sticks), a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics

What is funchi hasa? Funchi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews

and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)

1. Polenta flour/Funchi flour
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or



any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce. □

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.



Keeping up with the conniving spider... Nanzi fools Cha Tiger

Many years ago, Cha* Tiger did not live in the mondi*, but among civil society. Back then, he was feared by everyone. When he walked past in a halfway, everyone around would make room immediately, that's how ferocious he was.

One night a group of friends was hanging out and they were talking about Cha Tiger. "You know, that tiger sure is incredibly strong and I don't trust him one bit. He probably eats a lot too. Oh, I'm so scared of him!" one person said.

"Oh, don't be stupid! What can Cha Tiger do? He's all bark and no bite, that's it. I certainly am not afraid of him. I bet you guys that I could even sit on his back like I would any donkey." It was Nanzi who said this. The people around him laughed at his remarks, thinking how silly it was for him to say such things.

"You, Nanzi? You are such a liar! He'll stomp you into next Tuesday, stop saying such nonsense."

"I'm not lying!" Nanzi defended himself. "He'll take me all the way to Shon Arei*."

The next morning, Shon Arei already knew of what Nanzi had been saying about Cha Tiger. He was really curious to see if Nanzi was brave enough to put his money where his mouth is. Cha Tiger walked past.

"Hey, Cha Tiger!" someone called to him. He growled at the person. "Hey, Cha Tiger! Listen!"

"Nanzi made fun of you, said he wasn't afraid of you at all! Said he could sit on your back and that you weren't as strong as we think you are."

Cha Tiger stopped dead in his tracks, furious. "Well, I'll set him straight!" Cha Tiger ran toward Nanzi's house, prepared to teach Nanzi a painful lesson. The entire way there he was growling and yelling, making everyone around aware what was going to happen. They all ran inside and peaked through the blinds to see the fight that was going to unfold.

Nanzi also heard Cha Tiger's screams, slowly getting closer and closer. He was terrified. His face turned pale, and his teeth started chattering like someone with a high fever. Sweat was dripping down his forehead.

When Cha Tiger arrived at Nanzi's place, he stormed in and saw Nanzi's frail body lying face down in the corner. "Hey, how are you, Cha Tiger?" Nanzi asked, his voice trembling. "I Heard you were making fun of me in front of your little friends, so I came to hear from your own mouth what you have to say to me," Cha Tiger

retorted, still fuming.

"Me? Talk bad about you?" Nanzi chuckled nervously. "People are such liars, I swear. Can't you see how sick I am here?" Nanzi took a pause, like someone who couldn't breathe properly. In his case of course, it was probably from extreme fear. "Shi Maria* wanted to take me to Shon Arei, where someone can heal me from my illness." Still wrapped up in his act, Nanzi turned back face down. "Me, a father of nine little children..."

Cha Tiger was shocked. Nanzi looked absolutely terrible, God knows he was dying.

"Cha Tiger, you're strong. Could you put me on your back and take me to Shon Arei, I can barely walk," Nanzi pleaded. Cha Tiger took pity on the spider and agreed to do this favor. Nanzi climbed on the tiger's back, letting his body fall down and grabbing on to Cha Tiger's neck. "Would you mind putting a rope in your mouth so I can hold on? That way I can sit up straight," Nanzi asked. Cha Tiger growled in reluctance but said OK. And so they made their way to Shon Arei.

Once they started traveling through the mondi, Nanzi turned to Cha Tiger and said: "These mosquitos are so annoying! Cha Tiger, do you mind if I cut a piece of branch so I can keep these mosquitos away?" Cha Tiger let him take his branch.

Eventually they made it out the mondi to where everyone else was. Nanzi immediately perked up and whacked Cha Tiger with his branch, making the tiger jump. He ran all the way to Shon Arei's castle. Exhausted, he plumped down in front of His Majesty.

"See, Shon Arei? Cha Tiger ain't nothing but a big donkey!" Nanzi said proudly. Everyone around cheered: "Hurray, Nanzi!" Poor Cha Tiger was so embarrassed that he was fooled by the conniving spider, and so he ran into the mondi to hide. To this day, it's said that the tiger still hides away in the mondi.

Cha: Nickname placed in front of someone's name and can mean anything, like friend. However, it often has negative connotations first.

Mondi: dry wooded areas found on the ABC islands.

Shon Arei: The King

Shi Maria: Nanzi's wife. □

Story and pictures are from "Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)" by Nilda Pinto.



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

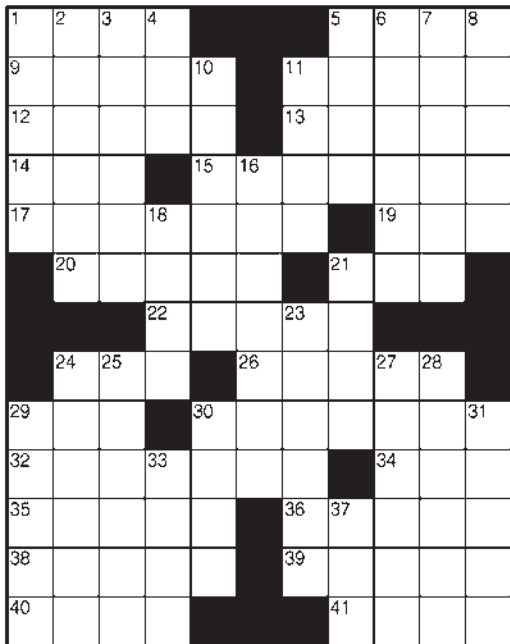
ACROSS

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30 Sprees
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DOWN

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D I E S A R C H
C E N T A N T H E M
O F F B I T O R E
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E R R S M U D S
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H U M M I N G B I R D
I S E E A M E L I A
P E T S G A L L O N



2-8

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-8 CRYPTOQUOTE

B U S A T U A D X ' R E Z N A R P A
Q U O B T J U ' O U C X T . B U S A H D
Q P Z R E Z N A D R P A O H T A
Q U O R P Q P H B A . — W O Z X N B H X G .
I U X A D

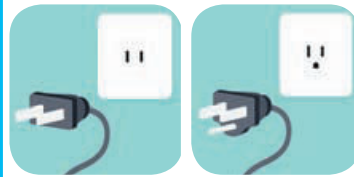
Cryptoquote: IF YOU LIVE TO BE A
HUNDRED, I WANT TO LIVE TO BE A HUNDRED
MINUS ONE DAY SO I NEVER HAVE TO LIVE
WITHOUT YOU. — A.A. MILNE

Cruise ship Schedule: Jan. 28 - 31 2026

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
WED	28	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	08.00	23.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	11.00	20.00	C	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	I	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
THU	29	COSTA PACIFICA	07.00	22.00	B	1
		AIDASOL	08.00	18.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN DAWN	11.00	20.00	I	1
FRI	30	MS RENAISSANCE	09.00	18.00	B	1
		EXPLORA II	09.00	22.00	C	1
SAT	31	SILVER SHADOW	08.00	****	B	1
		AIDAPERLA	09.00	21.00	C	1
		CARIBBEAN PRINCESS	09.00	22.00	I	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

6		9	5					1
4	7		1					9
		2	8	9				7
				6				8
	6	4					1	2
					8	6		
7				4		9	2	
9				8		7	5	
		5	7			1		6

Difficulty: ★★★

1/29

Answer to previous puzzle

9	1	5	6	4	2	8	3	7
2	4	3	7	8	1	6	9	5
8	6	7	5	9	3	2	4	1
3	7	9	8	5	6	1	2	4
5	8	1	3	2	4	7	6	9
6	2	4	9	1	7	5	8	3
1	5	2	4	3	8	9	7	6
7	3	8	1	6	9	4	5	2
4	9	6	2	7	5	3	1	8

Difficulty: ★★★

1/28



A person looks out of a window in an apartment building in Kansas City, Mo., May 3, 2020.

Associated Press

Being a night owl may not be great for your heart but you can do something about it

By LAURAN NEERGAARD

AP Medical Writer

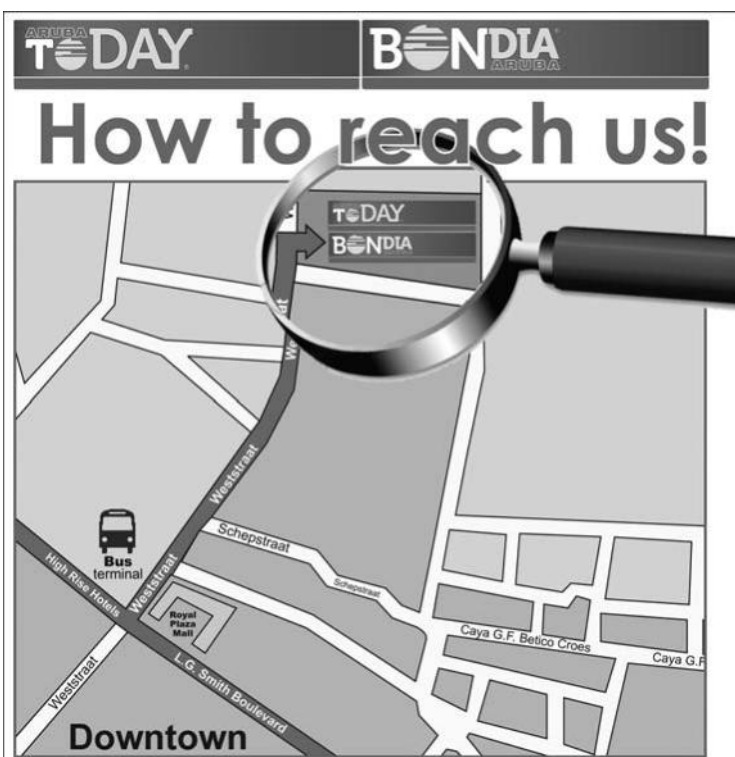
WASHINGTON (AP) — Being a night owl can be bad for your heart.

That may sound surprising but a large study found people who are more active late at night when most of the population is winding down or already asleep have poorer overall heart health than the average person.

"It is not like, that, night owls are doomed," said research fellow Sina Kianersi of Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, who led the study. "The challenge is the mismatch between your internal clock and typical daily schedules " that makes it harder to follow heart-healthy behaviors.

And that's fixable, added Kianersi, who describes himself as "sort of a night owl" who feels a boost in "my analytical thinking" after about 7 or 8 at night.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S. The American Heart Association has a list of eight key factors that everyone should heed for better heart health: being more physically active; avoiding tobacco; getting enough sleep and a healthy diet; and controlling blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar and weight. □



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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Captain America vs. Captain Clutch: Knight and Poulin face off for 5th and perhaps last Winter Games

By **JOHN WAWROW**
AP Hockey Writer

Kelly Pannek has spent the past decade enjoying a front-row view of U.S. teammate Hilary Knight and Canada's Marie-Philip Poulin one-upping the other in a fierce, friendly rivalry involving two of the most accomplished players in the history of women's hockey. Playful and easygoing as the two are away from the rink, Pannek has witnessed the intensity, gamesmanship and dialed-in ability to step up their games in the biggest moments.

"They push each other," Pannek said, before recalling the Americans' 6-3 gold-medal win over Canada at the 2023 world championships.

"I laugh actually because Poulin scores on the 5-on-3, and she shot it right over Hilary's foot," Pannek said. "Hilary took that personally, and then scored three goals and won us that



United States forward Hilary Knight (21) and Canada forward Marie-Philip Poulin (29) battle during the second period of the gold medal game at women's world hockey championships in Brampton, Ontario, Sunday, April 16, 2023.

Associated Press

game."

Knight doesn't dispute it. "Yeah, I was pissed," she said, laughing. And, yes, it mattered who scored.

"When a great player finds the back of the net against you, and it's your job to keep it out of the net, you're like, 'All right, let's go,'" Knight said.

Captain America vs. Captain Clutch

The gripping back-and-forth swings of gold-medal highs and silver-medal lows have played out over some 17 years and more than 100 games on the international stage between two players with altogether different backgrounds. Knight grew up in the Chicago suburbs, and Poulin in Beauceville, a rural town an hour's drive south of Quebec City.

It will be in Milan where the two meet next month for a fifth and potentially final time at the Winter Games. "If that's the case, it's a shame," Team Canada coach Troy Ryan said. "It's been a privilege to watch and to be witness to the back and forth."

They are guaranteed one more meeting in a preliminary round matchup on Feb. 10. There is a good chance they will face off again for gold nine days

later. At 36, Knight already has announced these Games will be her last. At 34, Poulin has not shed light on her Olympic future. Veteran U.S. defender Lee Stecklein still can't fathom the thought.

"I'll believe Hilary's done when I see it. I don't believe her," she said with a laugh. The numbers are astounding for two generational icons, and first to earn International Ice Hockey Federation female player of the year honors, Knight in 2024 and Poulin last June.

Knight has the edge with 10 world championship gold medals to Poulin's four. Knight also holds the world tournament record for goals (67), assists (53) and points (120).

Poulin has shined at the Olympics, earning her "Captain Clutch" nickname by scoring the gold medal-winning goal three times. She is second behind Knight on the world championship list with 89 points, and second on the Olympic list with 35 points, trailing former Canadian teammate Hayley Wickenheiser.

"I think it just goes to show that we want to be the best player every single time we hop on the ice, specifically also against one another,"

Knight said. "And we're going to put on a show."

National icons

The two are the faces of women's hockey in their respective nations.

"It takes a really special person to be able to withstand especially in Canada that amount of pressure and responsibility. And she does it with grace," former U.S. Olympian Meghan Duggan said of Poulin. "Similar to Hilary," added Duggan, Knight's teammate from 2007 to 2018. "Her ability to just naturally show up in big moments is unlike anything I've ever seen."

They first met on the international stage at the 2009 world championships, where Poulin made her Team Canada debut. It didn't take long for each to begin taking notice of the other.

Poulin's first memory was falling into the boards on a failed backcheck as Knight broke free to score in overtime of a 3-2 win in the gold-medal game at the 2011 world championships in Zurich.

"Yeah, that's how it started," Poulin said, laughing.

For Knight, her first recollection of Poulin came at the 2010 Winter Games in Van-

couver.

"She got loose on the draw, and it's in the back of our net pretty quickly," Knight said of Poulin scoring her second goal in Canada's 2-0 gold-medal win. "Our center drops her and I'm just like, 'Oh, my gosh, here we go.'"

They've gone at it ever since, and even spent a season as teammates in Montreal with the now-defunct Canadian Women's Hockey League.

Their legacies include playing instrumental roles in the growth of women's hockey, and in helping establish the Professional Women's Hockey League. The league, now in its third year, grew from six to eight teams this season, with more expansion on the horizon.

"They're both legends," said PWHL executive Jayna Hefford, a Hockey Hall of Famer. "I think it's a special moment for women's hockey to have the two of them facing off maybe one last time. Who knows, right? Who knows what they might do? I'll feel like a fan watching it and just trying to enjoy it."

Knight has found peace in already calling these her last Olympics. And yet, she continues dropping hints to suggest a potential change of mind. "Unless you convince me otherwise," Knight said in November when asked if she might get the itch again. "Yeah, maybe. We'll see."

Settled in Seattle

Two months later, while promoting Hershey's chocolate, Knight excitedly described the electric welcome the PWHL has received during her first season in Seattle.

"It definitely gives you a new life, a new breath," she told The Associated Press. "It's really heartfelt, and it only deepens that want for me to play even longer."

She has not lost her scoring touch. Last season in Boston, Knight finished tied for the PWHL lead with 29 points. □



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Todd Monken will be the next Cleveland Browns head coach, AP source says



Baltimore Ravens offensive coordinator Todd Monken looks on during pre-game warm-ups before an NFL football game against the New England Patriots, Sunday, Dec. 21, 2025, in Baltimore.
Associated Press

By **JOE REEDY**
AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — The Cleveland Browns are naming Todd Monken as their head coach, a person with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press on Wednesday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because

the team has not announced Monken's hiring. Monken, who turns 60 on Feb. 5, had been Baltimore's offensive coordinator for the past three seasons.

He first interviewed on Jan. 10 and had a second interview on Jan. 20. He has also interviewed for Tampa

Bay's offensive coordinator opening and was tied to the New York Giants offensive coordinator spot after John Harbaugh was named coach.

Browns defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz and Los Angeles Rams pass game coordinator Nate Scheel-

haase were also finalists. Monken is the seventh coach hired by owners Jimmy and Dee Haslam since they bought the franchise in 2012. The previous six compiled a 73-139-1 regular-season record, the second-worst mark in the NFL.

The Browns were 5-12 this season and 8-26 the past two years.

Cleveland interviewed 10 people for the opening after Kevin Stefanski was fired on Jan. 5.

Stefanski who was hired as Atlanta's coach had a 46-58 record.

He was a two-time AP NFL Coach of the Year and led the Browns to the playoffs in 2020 and '23.

Stefanski was also the first Cleveland coach to last at least six seasons since Sam Rutigliano (1978 through the midway point of the 1984 season).

Cleveland also talked to former offensive coordinator Tommy Rees (who has joined Stefanski in Atlanta), Mike McDaniels, Aden Durde, Dan Pitcher, Jesse Minter, Grant Udinski and

Anthony Lynn.

Monken, Schwartz, Udinski and Scheelhaase received second interviews.

After announcing Stefanski's firing, Jimmy Haslam bristled over the narrative that the Browns are a dysfunctional organization. However, the coaching search ended up having more people withdraw their names from consideration than finalists during the three-week search.

Udinski withdrew his name from consideration on Monday to remain in Jacksonville as offensive coordinator.

The Browns had second interviews scheduled with McDaniels and Minter before both canceled. McDaniels, who was Miami's coach for four seasons, will be the Los Angeles Chargers' offensive coordinator while Minter was named Baltimore's head coach after two seasons directing the Chargers' defense.

Monken does have previous history with the Browns, serving as offensive coordinator on Freddie Kitchens' staff in 2019. □

Bill Belichick snubbed by Pro Football Hall of Fame in first year of eligibility, report says

By **JOSH DUBOW**
AP Pro Football Writer

Six-time Super Bowl champion head coach Bill Belichick didn't get voted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility, according to a report from ESPN.

Citing four unidentified sources, ESPN reported Tuesday that Belichick didn't receive the necessary 40 votes from the 50-person panel of media members and other Hall of Famers. ESPN said Belichick received a call from the Hall of Fame last Friday with the news.

The Hall of Fame declined to comment before its class of 2026 is announced at NFL Honors in San Fran-

cisco on Feb. 5.

The report of Belichick's snub was met with significant criticism, including from Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes, who posted on social media: "Insane ... don't even understand how this could be possible."

Belichick was hired by New England in 2000 and led the franchise to six Super Bowl wins and three other appearances in the title game during an 18-year span from 2001-18. Belichick's 333 wins in the regular season and playoffs with New England and Cleveland are the second most to Don Shula's 347. He won AP NFL Coach of the Year three times.

Belichick also was one of the game's top defensive assistants before taking over in New England, winning two earlier Super Bowls as defensive coordinator for the New York Giants.

Belichick's career did have blemishes. He was implicated in a sign-stealing scandal dubbed "Spygate" in the 2007 season and was fined \$500,000 after the team was caught filming defensive signals from the New York Jets during a game.

Belichick's tenure in New England ended following the 2023 season. He just finished his first year coaching in college at North Carolina.

Belichick was one of five finalists among coaches, contributors and senior players who last appeared in a game in 2000 or ear-

lier. Patriots owner Robert Kraft was the contributor finalist, with Roger Craig, Ken Anderson and L.C. Greenwood the players. □



New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick holds up the Vince Lombardi Trophy as he celebrates the Patriots' victory over the Seattle Seahawks in NFL Super Bowl XLIX football game Feb. 1, 2015, in Glendale, Ariz.

Associated Press

'I was lucky' says Djokovic after setting up Australian Open semifinal against Sinner

By JOHN PYE

AP Sports Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— After a walkover and an in-match retirement, 10-time Australian Open winner Novak Djokovic will meet two-time defending champion Jannik Sinner in the semifinals.

Djokovic dropped the first two sets of his quarterfinal 6-4, 6-3 Wednesday to fifth-seeded Lorenzo Musetti but was up a break in the third when the 23-year-old Italian retired with an injured right leg. The 38-year-old Djokovic admitted he was "lucky this time."

It wasn't really the way Djokovic wanted to cap yet another record – his



Novak Djokovic of Serbia reacts as he receives treatment to a foot injury during his quarterfinal match against Lorenzo Musetti of Italy at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026.

lucky to have someone like him in front of my eyes and I can hopefully learn something. I feel like every day, every time he plays, I can learn something about him."

Since capturing his 24th Grand Slam singles title in 2023, unprecedented among men and for anyone in the Open Era, Djokovic has been bidding for a 25th and to become the most decorated tennis player of all time.

Djokovic's dramatic win

Djokovic was two sets down, slowed by a serious blister on his foot and already thinking about his flight home when fifth-seeded Musetti called it quits.

Musetti needed a medical timeout for treatment on his upper right leg after being broken in the third game of the third set. He played on for almost two games but couldn't continue.

After serving a double-fault in the fifth game to give Djokovic a breakpoint chance, Musetti wiped a hand across his face, walked toward the net and removed his headband before exchanging a handshake and quick hug.

"I honestly have no words to describe how I'm feeling right now and how tough it is for me with this injury in this moment," Musetti said. "I continued to play because I was playing really, really, really well, but I was feeling that the pain was increasing and the problem was not going away."

Djokovic said he felt for Musetti.

"It happened to me a few times. But being in the quarters of a Grand Slam, two sets to love up and being in full control I mean, so unfortunate," Djokovic said.

"He should have been a winner today."

Musetti was also forced to retire from the French Open semifinals last year with a similar injury against eventual champion Alcaraz. □

Associated Press

103rd win at Melbourne Park, one better than Roger Federer's previous all-time mark – but he accepted any route through. Sinner was all business in a 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 win over eighth-seeded Ben Shelton in a night match to extend his streak to 19 at Melbourne Park.

Sinner conceded he was lucky to still be in the tournament, too, after struggling with cramps and staggering in his third-round match until the roof was closed and he went back on court reinvigorated.

The top four seeds have reached the final four in the men's draw, with No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz and No. 3 Alexander Zverev set to meet in the other semifinal.

Sinner has a 6-4 lead in head-to-heads with Djokovic, but he's won the last five. That sequence includes semifinals at the 2024 Australian Open and at Roland Garros and Wimbledon last year. It was the semifinal here two years ago that propelled Sinner toward his first major title.

"It improves you as a player and a person," Sinner said of his matches with the tennis great. "We're still lucky to have Novak here playing incredible tennis at his age. "As a 24-year-old, I'm

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